

NYHT - 11 JUL 57

Reds Get Millions Here To Insure Food Gifts

CPYRGHT

Exact Huge Fees to Deliver Goods From Persons Helping Relatives

By Lyn Fernback

The Soviet Union is collecting millions of dollars annually from persons in the United States who are willing to pay exorbitant fees to guarantee delivery of food and clothing to their relatives in Russia, the Herald Tribune learned yesterday. Last year Russia collected more than \$3,600,000 in such fees.

The collection of such large amounts of hard American currency by Russia in this way has only been possible since the Kremlin's "softer" line with the West which followed Stalin's death in 1953.

Since that time, an increasing number of residents of the Soviet Union have been able to get in touch with relatives in this country. The result has been a great number of requests for packages of food and clothing received from Russians, who, during the years of Stalin's terror, did not dare to accept gifts from the United States.

Many refugees from the Soviet Union now living in this country do not have much money to spare. But a son receiving a request for food from his mother in Soviet Estonia, or a daughter being asked for clothing from her father in Siberian exile are willing to make great sacrifices to ease the lives of their families.

Such sacrifices, relatives here are finding out, are necessary.

The Fees Reds Get

In order to send a parcel containing clothing valued at \$22.10, the following fees must be paid to the U.S.S.R. agent:

U.S.S.R. fee (10%)	\$ 2.21
U.S.S.R. customs (50-125%)	12.23
U.S.S.R. inspection fee	1.51
U.S.S.R. fee (1 per cent)	.38
Service charge of agency	8.50
Fumigation	1.50
Guarantee	2.73
Delivery notification	.38
Total fees	\$29.44

to obtain the Soviet co-operation needed to have gift parcels reach their destinations inside Russia and the Iron Curtain countries.

Although the United States post offices accept packages for shipment to Russia, those interested find that gifts sent in this manner did not reach their destinations.

Moreover, readers of local émigré newspapers learn of American companies, acting on behalf of Soviet organizations, who will guarantee delivery of their gift packages inside Russia for a fee.

An example will illustrate this point:

Earlier this year, a resident

continued on page 12, column 2

CPYRGHT

d- Andrus.

Food Gifts

(Continued from page one)

of Brooklyn took a package to Parcels to Russia, Inc., 1530 Bedford Ave., Brooklyn. A clerk appraised the value of the parcel's contents at \$22.10.

The Brooklyn resident then paid a total of \$29.44 to insure delivery of the package to a relative in a Soviet-occupied Baltic country.

Of this charge, \$20.94 went to the Soviet government and \$8.50 to the local agency. There was no explanation concerning the U. S. S. R. and the "inspection" charges. In addition, the sender had to pay a postal fee of \$6.17 to the United States.

According to Post Office officials, an estimated 230,000 packages were sent to Russia from the United States last year. Nearly all were sent through agencies such as Parcels to Russia, Inc.

Agencies' Income Listed

Last week, Attorney General Herbert Brownell Jr. sent a report to Congress indicating the annual income of agencies handling packages for shipment to Russia. The report gave the following figures on the income of such agencies during 1956:

Parcels to Russia, Inc., \$353,223.

Globe Travel Service, 1991 Broadway, \$1,076,771.

Central Parcel Service, of Chicago, \$313,865.

Each of these agencies was listed as a registered agent of Intourist Ltd., Moscow, and the monies received were listed as "payment for gift parcels." A total of more than \$3,600,000 was listed in the Department of Justice report as having been received by registered agents of the Soviet Union in payment for gift packages.

Indicating the scale of this Soviet project, a Lithuanian-born resident of New York told the New York Herald Tribune that he and other refugees from the Soviet Baltic area spend about \$100 a month each for packages to help their relatives in Soviet Russia. "And we can do it," he added.

CPYRGHT

25X1C10b

CPYRGHT